

# Delaware Launches Free CyberStart America Challenge

*National online cybersecurity talent search and competition open to all Delaware high school students*

**Dover** – Governor John Carney today announced Delaware's participation in CyberStart America – an innovative, online cybersecurity talent search and competition sponsored by the National Cyber Scholarship Foundation and SANS Institute. Delaware's high school students are encouraged to explore their aptitude for cybersecurity and computer science by participating in the program and will have the opportunity to win scholarships, as well as prizes and recognition for their schools.

**The CyberStart America** program is a series of 100% online challenges that allow students to act as cyber protection agents, solving cybersecurity-related puzzles and explore related topics such as code breaking, programming, networking, and digital forensics. The program can be assigned as part of homework, can form the basis of an extracurricular club, or students can just try it on their own. Participating students and their teachers do not need knowledge or experience in information technology or cybersecurity to take part. Everything they need can be learned in the game. The program is free for schools and students, and all Delaware students in grades 9-12 are invited to participate. Building on the success of last year's Girls Go CyberStart program, this year's CyberStart Game is open to all high school students. Anyone who reaches level 5 in Game will qualify for the national competition to win scholarships. To further encourage participation of young women and JROTC cadets, communities are offering additional support and community-specific awards within the overall scholarship competition.

“This is a great program that builds on our statewide efforts to provide students with real-world experience and technology skills that will be valuable in any career,” said **Governor John Carney**. “These competitions offer fun activities for young people to explore and learn about the high-tech, high-impact field of cybersecurity.”

“CyberStart is a great way empower and inspire young people to pursue STEM fields including cybersecurity,” said **Acting Chief Information Officer Jason Clarke**. “In a pilot of the program last year we had over 180 students participate and 16 succeeded in reaching the national finals. This year we hope to triple the number of students participating and reaching the scholarship round.”

“The CyberStart challenge is both a fun and educational experience that gives students the chance to engage in lively hands-on learning and the opportunity to earn valuable college scholarships. We hope even more students will participate in the challenge this year,” **Secretary of Education Susan Bunting** said.

The National Cyber Scholarship Foundation anticipates awarding scholarships worth a total of **\$2 million for use at any accredited college** to 600 high-scoring students across the nation who participate in the competition in 2021, with students able to compete for state-specific and community-specific prizes as well as national championship status. There will also be incentives for Delaware high schools to encourage more students to reach the qualifying level in CyberStart Game, including exclusive access to additional cybersecurity education resources and recognized cyber skills mastery badges for their students.

Complete details may be found at [www.cyberstartamerica.org](http://www.cyberstartamerica.org). High school students may register for the program beginning October 30 and may begin playing the CyberStart Game at 12:00 AM EST, November 15. They may continue playing, and invite

their friends to join them, through February 28, 2021. Students will be informed that they qualify for the CyberStart National Scholarship Challenge Round (the “Nationals”) as soon as they have achieved sufficient progress, but they are allowed to continue playing and learning in order to build more skills that will be useful to them in the Nationals. To see the types of challenges students will face in the games, visit <https://go.cyberstart.com>.

Participating students and schools are encouraged to share updates on social media with **#cyberstartDE**.

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### **About the Delaware Department of Technology and Information**

The Department of Technology and Information (DTI) is the state’s central IT organization, chartered to deliver core services to other state organizations and exercise governance over the technology direction and investments of the state. DTI provides enterprise services that enable other organizations to effectively fulfill their missions.

[www.dti.delaware.gov](http://www.dti.delaware.gov)

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### **About SANS Institute**

The SANS Institute was established in 1989 as a cooperative research and education organization. SANS provides cyber security training and certification to professionals at governments and commercial institutions world-wide. Renowned SANS instructors teach over 50 different courses at more than 200 live [cyber security training](#) events as well as online. At the heart of SANS are the many security practitioners, representing varied global organizations from corporations to universities, working together to help the entire information

security community.

<https://www.sans.org>